

Reduce Unintended Pregnancies through Family Planning Services

Background:

Unintended pregnancies are a public health concern in Iowa and across the United States. Unintended pregnancies result in high costs to the families involved and to the community. Voluntary family planning services provide opportunities for women and families to avoid unintended pregnancy, plan desired pregnancies, improve pregnancy outcome and achieve educational goals and greater economic security.

In 2009 the University of Iowa Public Policy Center looked at the public cost savings of providing voluntary family planning services. The study *"A Benefit-Cost Analysis of Public Funded Family Planning Services: The Cost of Unintended Pregnancy in Iowa"* showed that over a one year period for every \$1.00 of public funds spent on voluntary family planning services \$3.78 was saved in averted costs. The study also showed that over a five year time frame the ratio of benefit to cost increases to \$15.12.

For family planning services, Medicaid pays 90% of the costs and the state pays 10% of the costs. This Medicaid rate shows the importance of voluntary family planning services. The rate also makes it extremely affordable for states to provide family planning services.

For the past six years Iowa has had a Medicaid family planning waiver. This waiver allows women and men of child bearing ages with family incomes less than 300% of federal poverty guidelines (matching Iowa's Medicaid prenatal eligibility level) who are without insurance coverage or are underinsured, to receive family planning services only through Medicaid. It also covers women who have been on Medicaid for prenatal and delivery care to receive family planning services for 12 months following birth.

Policy Recommendations:

- ◆ Support the continuation of the Iowa Medicaid Family Planning Waiver.

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